(ii) Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana

This scheme provides insurance cover to handloom weavers in case of nat ural and accidental death as also disability. The benefits range from Rs. 60,000 to Rs. 1.5 lakh.

(2) INTEGRATED HANDLOOMS DEVELOPMENT SCHEME is under consideration of the government. The scheme is formed by subsuming some of the components of Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana, Integrated Handloom Training Project, Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme and Integrated Handloom Cluster Development Scheme. The scheme proposes to develop clusters of handloom weavers in group approach. It will also provide assistance for basic inputs, marketing incentive and strengthening of handloom organizations.

(3) MARKETING & EXPORT SCHEME

The Marketing & Export Promotion Scheme has two components (i) Marketing Promotion and (ii) Handloom Export Promotion.

(i) The Marketing Promotion covers organization of Exhibitions, Events and Craft Melas, Setting up of Urban Haats, Setting up of Marketing Complexes, Publicity & Awareness. Geographical Indication Act, Handloom Marketing Complex, Janpath, New Delhi and Handloom Mark.

(ii) The objective of the Handloom Export Promotion is to assist the handloom cooperative societies & corporations through publicity related activities'and participation in International Exhibitions. Buyer-Seller Meets etc.

(4) MILL GATE PRICE SCHEME

The objective of the Mill Gate Scheme is to provide all types of yarn to the handloom weavers' organizations at the Mill Gate Price.

(5) DIVERSIFIED HANDLOOM DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Scheme has been formulated with the objective of providing skill upgradation of the handloom weavers through training, workshops and exhibitions, design development documentation of traditional designs and providing linkage and meeting the marketing requirements. It has also been decide to conduct the third all India Handloom Census and issue Identity Cards to the handloom weavers.

(b) and (c) The Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana (DDHPY) was introduced in the year 2000-01. From the inception of the scheme and upto 31.03.2007, financial assistance of Rs. 466.21 ercre was released in form of grant to benefit commulatively about 30,47,252 weavers.

(d) Components of the Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana have been subsumed into the new Integrated Handlooms Development Scheme proposed to be implemented during Xlth Plan.

Dilution of MPEDA's priorities

*193. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) is giving more importance to tuna fisheries and less to exports;

(b) whether it is a fact that MPEDA held some meeting in Visakhapatnam recently;

(c) if so, the details of this meeting and achievements thereof;

(d)whether MPEDA will outsource marine product export and concentrate on development fishing fleets; and

(e) the reasons for diversifications of MPEDA and dilution of its basic charter?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (e): The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) has been set up to take measures for development of the marine products industry with special reference to exports which, *inter-alia,* also includes developing and regulating offshore and deep-sea fishing and undertaking measures for the conservation and management of off-shore and deep-sea fisheries with the specific mandate to regulate and promote export of marine products. The exploitation of tuna resources has been identified as one among the several thrust areas to be actively pursued. In this regard, MPEDA launched 22 converted vessels for tuna fishing on 12.10.2007 from Vishakhapatnam. The Government of India formulates export policies with regard to marine product after consultations with all stakeholders, including, significantly MPEDA. There has been no dilution in the basic charter of MPEDA, and in the course of implementing its basic charter (elucidated above), all backward and forward linkage tracks are required to be covered to ensure holistic attainment of MPEDA's basic mandate.

Opposition to foreign investment in retail trade

†*194. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether some of the States like Kerala have not allowed to open Western style retail food stores;

(b) the steps taken by Government for the protection of traditional retail business of India;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Indian retail traders are opposed to allowing the retail trade open for foreign investors; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government for the redressal of their objections?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) While Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is not allowed in retail trading except for retailing of Single Brand Products, there is no restriction on domestic retailers to establish retail stores in the country. However, certain States like Kerala have, in principle, opposed entry of domestic companies in the retail sector in the States.

(c) Government has received various representations from industry associations against allowing FDI in retail trade.

(d) The present policy does not permit FDI in retail trade except Single Brand retail where FDI up to 51%, with prior Government approval, is allowed.

Products sold under Single Brand Retail with FDI cater to the brand-conscious young, middle class clientele having a difference niche as compared to that served by the small traders. Hence, FDI in retail trade of single brand products is not expected to affect the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.